



State Youth Treatment – Implementation Grant

The Alliance for Adolescent Recovery and Treatment in Texas (AART-TX) project aims to expand and improve treatment access, services, and outcomes for adolescents with substance use disorders (SUD) and/or co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders (COD) by implementing the state's youth treatment comprehensive strategic plan. This plan includes examination of financing and policy changes, workforce training and development, evidence-based practices for assessment, treatment and recovery support, and improved quality of services across the system.

In October 2015, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) was awarded a two-year planning grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and undertook a strategic planning process to improve publicly-funded youth Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Co-occurring Substance Use and Mental Health Disorder (COD) treatment services. The process included completion of a statewide financial map, a workforce map, a three-year statewide workforce training implementation plan, and a comprehensive three-year strategic plan to improve adolescent SUD and COD treatment.

Recently, HHSC was awarded a second grant from SAMHSA which will allow for implementation of the three-year strategic plan and the three-year workforce training and implementation plan. During the implementation phase, HHSC will aim to expand youth assessment, treatment, and recovery services in four regions of the state, including three major metropolitan areas (Houston, San Antonio, and Austin) and the underserved rural region of the Texas Panhandle. Services will target youth age 12 to 18. HHSC will offer a competitive funding opportunity to provider agencies to engage in a collaborative model to offer high-quality assessment and treatment using the evidence-based Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN) assessment, the Seven Challenges program model, and recovery supports.

HHSC will also embark on a range of system changes designed to improve the quality of youth treatment, including partnering with local colleges to expand training opportunities in evidence-based practices for adolescents, identifying financing policy and procedural changes that improve efficiency and costs, increasing the number of well-qualified licensed professionals in the adolescent treatment field, strengthening the youth peer mentor workforce, and more fully engaging youth and families in driving local and state planning activities.

Anticipated outcomes of the implementation phase will include improved quality of assessment, treatment, and recovery support services; increased number of providers and youth and families served; development of efficient, coordinated regional recovery-oriented systems of care; expansion of a well-trained specialty workforce; and improved health outcomes for youth and families.

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